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STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, WHA/CCA  
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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [CI](#)  
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - CUBA AND LATAM; SANTIAGO

1.El Mercurio, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record, Sun. circ. 260,108; 12/21 editorial entitled "Cuba and Latin America": "President Bachelet will make an official visit to Cuba in February.... This is hard to comprehend, since Chile has historically been committed to the defense of human rights and has therefore been forced to vote against Cuba in the United Nations.... There are no interests compelling Chile to make this special gesture toward Cuba.... Cuba has also recently attended expanded regional summits, and has reportedly assessed the possibility of its return to the OAS. Amidst all this rapid and unexpected process, no one has invoked the democratic clauses contained in the OAS Charter or in many other regional agreements.... None of this is conducive to the democratic transition anticipated in Cuba after half a century. Instead, it seems that [this process] is a result of the predominant political inclination and double standard in the region, where dictatorships are sanctioned according to on their [political] ideology. This situation is a backward step in the confusing Latin American scenario.... In the case of Cuba, Latin America is now in debt to its own principles."